

IF YOU DO NOT ASK, THE ANSWER IS ALWAYS NO

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By Rhoberta Shaler

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John wanted a particular week off this summer to attend a family reunion. It was particularly important to him for two reasons: for the first time, every single member of the family would be there, and it would be on Maui. He checked the office schedule and found that another member of his team had already booked the same time away. Disappointedly he told his family he could not attend. The answer he accepted was 'No'.

The truth was that the co-worker who booked that time off had chosen her week off at random. A simple request from John would have been all that was required for her to change her dates. What was going on here?

## EXPECTATIONS

Our expectations in any relationship are based on history, on how things have worked in the past. Interestingly, we will even take someone else's history as evidence. Does this make sense? Sometimes, yes, and sometimes, no.

There are very few true 'laws'. People do not do the same things in the same ways with the same people in every case. Yet, often, we behave as though this is true. If it happened once, it will always happen! If it happened to someone, it will happen to me.

Sure, it makes sense to stay away from sharks. They usually attack and you look like food. As there is likely no good reason to approach a shark, there is no problem. What, though, if that

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shark had your son's arm in its mouth? You would likely take some action to get what you want.

The same is true at the office. When something is important to you and contributes to your well-being, it requires action. History may have told you that asking may be difficult, timing may be tricky and receiving may be unlikely, but, if you do not ask, the answer will always be 'No!'.

### RELATIONSHIPS

It's true that we are most comfortable asking those folks we

know least and those we know best for something we want. It's simply easiest! Folks unknown to you come with no expectation of outcome. Rejection from them is easier to handle. Folks you know well will either give you what you want or, at least, soften their refusal by taking care of the relationship. It's those in-between folks that are daunting.

When you ask someone for help, you are telling them that you believe they have the skills or experience to give you that help. Don't you feel good when someone asks for your help? Of course, we're not talking about those few folks who are always asking for it, those who are too lazy, too busy or too demanding.

You can enhance a relationship by asking for help. You open the relationship to become more reciprocal. That's a choice only you can determine is appropriate. If you do not want to be asked for something, best not ask yourself! But, if you do not ask, the answer is always "No!".

### APPROACH

Some ways of approaching an issue are more productive than others. It's unlikely you'll get what you want by beginning with "I'm sure you'll say 'No', but..." You may have tried that one when you were a teen-ager. It didn't work well, did it?

First, be prepared. Be ready to ask clearly for what you want. Know why you want it. Be prepared with benefits to the listener for giving you what you are requesting. If possible, give them a plan that will work for them...and for you. When you do the work, you're more likely to get what you want.

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Then, pick your moment carefully, then check. "I would like to discuss something with you. Is this a good time?" or "When would you have a few minutes free to discuss something?" If you are asking a supervisor or manager, they will likely want to know what the topic is. This is fair, however, how you answer is important. It can make all the difference between getting the meeting or not.

Phrase your issue broadly and positively . "I'd like to discuss the vacation schedule." rather than, "I need to talk to you about getting the dates I want for vacation." Give the overall topic, not your specific request. If pressed for specifics, again be positive, clear and brief.

### JUST DO IT

Once in the meeting, first, thank them for their time. Give the

benefits to the listener for giving you what you want, then ask. Ask clearly for exactly what you want. Do not apologize for your request. You have the right to ask as they have the right to refuse. Whatever the outcome, the relationship will shift slightly no matter who you ask for what! Be prepared.

You have probably heard the English proverb: 'Most things are lost for want of asking.'. There is no need to lose anything for that reason. Simply ask. You may be surprised how easy this becomes with practice. Remember, though, if you do not ask, the answer is always 'No'. So ask!

Rhoberta Shaler, PhD Keynotes, Seminars & Coaching for entrepreneurs & professionals who want the motivation & strategies to achieve, to lead and to live richly. Creator of the Living Richly™ Program Host of Living Richly™ on [www.wsRadio.ws](http://www.wsRadio.ws). Author of OPTIMIZE Your Day! Practical Wisdom for Optimal Living Optimize Life Now! San Diego, CA [www.OptimizeLifeNow.com](http://www.OptimizeLifeNow.com)

### WHEN WILL THE ANSWER COME

By Irvin I. Rozier

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This is the song I wrote about in my article "RICKY SINGS..A SONG HE DID NOT KNOW", published earlier. This song was written under the inspiration of the LORD, and only took 10 minutes to write.

WHEN WILL THE ANSWER COME, words by Irvin L. Rozier, music to song by Joel L. Rozier

Verse 1

WHEN WILL THE ANSWER COME, WHAT WILL THE ANSWER BE  
WHERE WILL I BE WAITING, FOR THE LORD'S ANSWER TO ME  
SO LONG I'VE BEEN ANTICIPATING, ON THE ANSWER I'M AWAITING  
MANY SLEEPLESS NIGHTS SPENT TALKING, TO MY LORD WITH WHOM I'M WALKING

CHORUS

THE LORD HEARS AND ANSWERS MY PRAYERS  
I CAST ON HIM MY EVERY CARE  
I KNOW SOMEHOW, SOMEWHERE  
THE ANSWER WILL SURELY BE THERE

Verse 2

I KNOW MY GOD HEARS WHEN I CALL, HE HEARD THE PRAYERS OF BROTHER PAUL  
HE LISTENS TO MY REQUESTS, I KNOW HE'LL SEND HIS VERY BEST  
MY FAITH IN HIM MUST INCREASE, HE'LL GIVE ME HIS WONDERFUL PEACE  
MANY TIMES MY FAITH HAS GROWN WEAK, TO ME O LORD PLEASE SPEAK.

(speak these words as music plays: THE LORD, HE HEARS AND ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS, NOW  
LET US PRAY

(Tag 1)

HEY NOW, HEY NOW  
LET'S PRAY NOW, PRAY NOW  
CAUSE SOMEHOW, SOMEWAY  
THANGS ARE GUNNA BE OKAY  
THE ANSWER, ANSWER  
WILL BE THERE, BE THERE  
AND SOMEHOW, SOMEWAY  
THANGS ARE GUNNA TO BE OKAY

VERSE 3

THE ANSWER WILL SURELY APPEAR, AND WASH AWAY MY TEARS  
IT'LL BE WORTH ALL THE PAIN AND THE SORROW  
WHEN I SEE MY BRIGHT TOMORROW

CHORUS

THE LORD HEARS AND ANSWERS MY PRAYERS  
I CAST ON HIM MY EVERY CARE  
I KNOW SOMEHOW, SOMEWHERE  
THE ANSWER WILL SURELY BE THERE

IF YOU DO NOT ASK, THE ANSWER IS ALWAYS NO

REPEAT CHORUS

TAG 2 REPEAT (SAME AS TAG 1)

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